



# Maricopa County Animal Care & Control

## *Selecting Safe Cat Toys*

Is your cat a world-class pouncer and stalker? Or perhaps she prefers to recline in the windowsill. Whether your cat is an athletic dynamo or a champion cat-napper - cats of all ages need regular exercise to stay healthy and happy. There are many toys available at pet supply stores that can safely fill the needs of you and your feline companion. Here are some tips to consider before you buy.

Some of the best toys for cats are interactive, meaning that you can be involved in playtime. When your cat plays, she may look like she's stalking prey. This is no accident. Her wild cousins are predators, and playing brings out her hunting instincts. That's why cats are fascinated by toys that can be shaken, wiggled, dangled or otherwise made to look like they're alive. Try a kitty teaser, which is a simple wire or plastic-string toy with a securely attached feather or other object. Some of these toys even look like fishing poles. Be sure to put interactive toys away when playtime is over to avoid injury to your cat.

Catnip mice and catnip "sacks" are good toys for cats, provided they are well-made and do not include any tiny

beads, buttons or trims that could fall off and be eaten or swallowed. Small, bouncy balls are just right for cats to bat and push, but take care they don't contain very small bells or plastic parts.

You can also make your own toys. The simplest of all? A cardboard box, in which cats can play hide-and-seek. Cardboard tubes also intrigue felines.

Cats also love to scratch and they love to perch in high places. Delight your cat by purchasing or building some cat furniture that is great to climb on and scratch. Cats prefer scratching rough surfaces like the back of carpet or sisal rope. Keep this in mind when selecting cat furniture or scratching posts.

### **Toys to Avoid**

Maricopa Animal Care & Control recommends that you avoid toys made of dangerous materials such as tinsel or Mylar. And balls of string are definite no-nos, too. If ingested, string can wrap around your cat's intestines, which can cause serious internal injury. Other inappropriate play objects are your hands and fingers. This can lead to aggression and biting.

For more information on animal care, behavior or AC&C programs,  
contact (602) 506-PETS or visit [pets.maricopa.gov](http://pets.maricopa.gov)  
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